

ADM

5

Adms 5/4/238



INAUGURATION
of
GHANA TELEVISION
SERVICE

SPEECH

by

Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah
President of the Republic of Ghana
at the Ceremony of Inauguration
July 31, 1965

4p

38

**SPEECH BY OSAGYEFO THE PRESIDENT ON THE
INAUGURATION OF GHANA TELEVISION
ON 31st JULY, 1965**

I am happy to be here with you today, to inaugurate Ghana's Television Service and to share with you and the people of Ghana, the sense of joy and expectancy on this important occasion. We are also here to inaugurate today the expansion of our Sound Broadcasting Service.

The idea of building a Television Service for the education and edification, the enjoyment and entertainment of our people was conceived almost six years ago. At that time, the sceptics declared that the establishment of a truly indigenous Television Service, organised and staffed by Ghanaians was an impossible task. Undaunted, we set up a Television Commission consisting of two experienced officers lent by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation to make recommendations on the establishment of television in Ghana. The report of this Commission was published in December, 1959, and accepted by the Government. Planning for Ghana television began in earnest, and during the last five years we, and I mean all of you who in one way or the other have contributed to what we see around us today, have worked patiently, diligently and with commendable zeal to build this project.

And may I say here how grateful we are to the overseas personnel who have assisted us in this trying and engaging venture. Some of them are still with us now, and others are no longer with us.

And here, I would like to thank the Canadian Government, who have been so generous to us in their assistance, in equipment and personnel, in connection with the establishment of Ghana's Television. We owe them a great debt of gratitude.

I accept the fine presentation which has just been made to me on behalf of the Marconi Company. The Company has assisted us in no small measure in the construction of our Television transmitters and studio complex. We are grateful to them.

It is the aim of the Government to ensure that all our people have access to Ghana Television. As a result of an agreement between the Government and the Sanyo Company and two

other companies in Japan, we have established here the Ghana Sanyo Corporation for the production of television sets in Ghana. The Corporation is at present engaged in building a factory at Tema. It is expected that the construction of this factory will be completed by the end of this year and be ready to go into production in the New Year.

As I have said, the relay services for sound broadcasting will be greatly expanded by building new relay stations particularly in the rural areas. In addition, the Government has established the State Electronic Products Corporation which will produce more relay boxes, transistor sets and other electronic products for the country.

I want to say a special word of appreciation at this time, to the devoted and dedicated work which has been done behind the scenes, by all the Ghanaians who have taken part in this great enterprise. There is no need for me to underline the part played by the Board of the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation and its Chairman, Mr. Cecil Forde, the Director of Television, Mrs. Shirley Du Bois, and the Deputy Director, Mr. Alex Quarmyne. But my commendation will be incomplete if I fail to mention the Chief Engineer, Mr. Oppong and his staff, the Assistant Chief Engineer, Mr. Dentu; the vivacious Head of Programmes, Miss Genoveva Marais, and her team of able and indefatigable producers: the Head of News, Mr Shang-Simpson; the Acting Head of Film, Mr. Wilcox Amartey; and the Acting Head of Designs, Mr. Francis Adansi. These keen and devoted officers and those working with them have been the key personnel in this important and trying operation. We are proud of them. May they continue to hold aloft the banner of Ghana Television.

And what can I yet say of the film cameramen, designers, newsmen, technicians and the producers, without whom Ghana's Television would not have become the reality it is today. To them all I say—Well done and *Ayeekoo*.

I have had the opportunity recently to learn something of the staff structure and conditions of service of the staff of the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation, and the efforts which had been made to improve these conditions. I have given directions in this matter, and the Board of the Corporation will very shortly announce promotions and changes in the conditions of service, which will go quite a long way to meet the problems which now face some of you.

And now, I want to express a warm welcome to the group of Television Technicians who have come here from the Federal Republic of Germany to assist us in the production of Television programmes. These Technicians who have been sponsored by the Friedrich Ebert Foundation, a private organisation in the Federal Republic of Germany, will work in close co-operation with the staff of Ghana Television, and will concentrate mainly on the production of technical educational television programmes. These will include films on all aspects of science and technical training, agricultural techniques, and a special series of films for the teaching of vocational work and practical lessons for home and school. These programmes will be made available to support the programmes produced by the regular staff of Ghana Television. In this way the quality and content of our Television Service, as a whole, will be improved and enhanced, in the playing of its full part in the life of our society.

We have, deliberately, postponed the opening of Ghana's Television until we could be absolutely sure that we were ready to provide a Service in accord with our national aspirations, and in conformity with our socialist objectives. When I addressed Parliament in October, 1963, I stated then the basic purposes behind Ghana's Television. This is what I said:

"Ghana's Television will be used to supplement our educational programme and foster a lively interest in the world around us. It will not cater for cheap entertainment nor commercialism. Its paramount object will be education in the broadest and purest sense. Television must assist in the socialist transformation of Ghana."

Ghana's Television, which we are inaugurating today, will be judged by the extent to which it fulfils these aims. Our Television Service should be African in its outlook; and in its content, even though it may express and reflect outside and foreign experiences, should remain geared to the needs of Ghana and Africa. It must reflect and promote the highest national and social ideals of our ideology and society. In this endeavour, the Board of the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation, together with all the executives and staff of the Television Service are charged with a great and onerous responsibility. It will be their duty to ensure that the professional standards attained by Ghana's Television are comparable to the best anywhere in the world. It will also be their duty to think about

and develop new techniques, improving and designing new equipment and new ways to achieve a more effective use of our Television medium.

Now, a final word on Television.

We must recognize the prime importance of the creative writer, whose skill and inventiveness are so essential and indispensable to Television. It is the Ghanaian writer who can adequately express the essence of the Party's ideology, the arts, music and drama, and culture of a growing and advancing nation, and the spirit and emotions of our people which must find expression in our Television.

Ghanaian writers must, therefore, be closely associated with the planning, development, and production of all our Television programmes. To this end, our writers and artists must be consulted in all discussions of the content of their scripts, and the use to which the scripts will eventually be put in the preparation of programmes for Television. It is to Ghanaian writers that Ghana must look for our future cultural progress, and Ghana Television should offer them a wonderful opportunity and an effective medium through which they can reach the masses of the people. An idea or a movement achieves reality only when it reaches the masses.

For this same reason, Ghana Television must not be isolated from the life of the people and other aspects of our traditional art and culture. A Television drama or comedy should be a co-operative or co-ordinating effort between the script writer, the film producer, the technical expert, and the Television programme organizer. It is to encourage this co-operative endeavour that we have established a Film Television and Broadcasting Training School here, in which instruction and guidance is provided, under one roof, for script writers as well as for cameramen, designers, newsmen and other film technicians. The best artists in the theatre, film and literature must share their talents with Television, in order that all the Ghanaian arts may reach that communal outburst of creativity, which has marked the great periods of art in other parts of the world.

Ghana is on the threshold of the fulfilment of her long suppressed genius and impulses, and it is only by a co-operative effort that we can bring all the talents of our nation to bear on the struggle for the socialist construction of Ghana. But

socialism is an epoch; it cannot be achieved in a day. It is only by sustained effort and determination that it can be realized.

Friends, Gentlemen and Co-Workers,

What I have said about Television applies equally well to Sound Broadcasting Service, whose extended programmes and expanded services I have also the great pleasure to inaugurate today. May I at the outset congratulate the Director of Sound Broadcasting, Mr. Coleman, and his staff for their efforts in the arduous task of building the Ghana Broadcasting System.

In order to improve the standards of our national broadcasting services, the Government has recently taken certain decisions which are to be put into effect immediately. First, all the existing three national networks of the Broadcasting Service will be converted into one single network, and all our national transmitters will carry the same programmes throughout the country.

Secondly, the number of hours during which Broadcasting programmes are heard on the radio will be increased and the contents of the programmes will also be considerably augmented and improved. For this purpose, the new Broadcasting transmitters at Ejura will be used to reinforce those in Accra. They will, however, carry the same single network.

Thirdly, the Broadcasting Relay Service will be expanded by building new relay stations particularly in the rural areas and by increasing the coverage of the existing stations.

In support of our national services, the External Service of our Broadcasting Corporation has been greatly expanded. As a result, the voice of Ghana will from now on be heard all over Africa and far around the world, carrying the message of African aspiration and progress, African emancipation and national unity.

Our Broadcasting Service should struggle ceaselessly to make itself the people's service. It should identify itself fully with the people's aspirations for a fuller life. It should continue to fight uncompromisingly against the forces militating against our progress. It will be its task to expose and unmask imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism in all its forms and manifestations, and support our endeavours for the political unification of our Continent. It must blaze the trail of socialism, it must be the *Okyeame* of Ghana's development, and its

economic and industrial advancement. It should, above all, strive to enlighten and uplift our people and keep before them the torch of Ghana's advancement.

All who are employed in our Television Service and our Sound Broadcasting Service have a unique opportunity, therefore, to play a vital role in the development of Ghana and in our struggle to eradicate from our society superstition, ignorance and illiteracy, and create in the minds of our people, through television and broadcasting, an awareness of the benefits to Ghana of modern science and technology.

I am confident that you will all bring to this task the highest sense of dedication and devotion. Let us hope that as a result of these new Services, the growth of socialist consciousness among the people will be hastened through our Television and Sound Broadcasting, and that fresh vistas on the world will be opened to them. We also expect that through your programmes, the struggle for the African liberation movement, for freedom and independence, the struggle against imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism, and the ever-continuing efforts for the attainment of peace and security throughout the world, will ever be maintained.

I have great pleasure in inaugurating Ghana's Television Service, and the expansion of our National and External Broadcasting Services. I wish those who work here happiness and success.